



## **BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL**

### **Equal Opportunities : Policy and Practice**

#### **The Policy**

The School operates a policy of equal opportunities for all, and stands against any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, religion, age, culture, ethnic group, language or disability.

#### **It aims to:**

- ❖ Promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all and thereby allow all pupils to achieve the level of success and self-respect to which they are entitled.
- ❖ Instil in pupils a respect for those of different gender and background.
- ❖ Establish an environment in which the School becomes effective in reducing prejudice and raising self-esteem.
- ❖ Provide a safe and welcoming background for all its members.
- ❖ Develop an environment in which all sexist and racist assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- ❖ Ensure that teachers by careful use of language and choice of resources avoid reinforcing stereotypical views.
- ❖ Prepare pupils for living in a complex multicultural society.
- ❖ Provide a curriculum which emphasises the positive aspects of all cultures and of cultural diversity in any society.

#### **To promote these aims, the School will:**

- ❖ Address equal opportunities matters through Assemblies, using pupil presentations wherever possible, and PSHE courses.
- ❖ Wherever and whenever possible in the curriculum, educate pupils about the importance of equal opportunities, and about other peoples, their cultures, religions and traditions.
- ❖ Through the actions of staff and senior pupils, foster the climate for recognition of the validity of other cultures and backgrounds.
- ❖ Support all new pupils from overseas' backgrounds through the BFG (Big Friendly Giant) system of pastoral support to ensure they feel part of the whole School community.

- ❖ Ensure that schemes of work reflect the interests and experiences of both boys and girls and of those from differing backgrounds.
- ❖ Choose resources which portray a view as seen from different cultural and gender perspectives, thereby communicating how it feels to be part of a different group.
- ❖ Challenge any notion that some subjects or career paths are purely masculine or feminine.
- ❖ Ensure as far as possible that all activities and facilities are open to both boys and girls, and to both day-pupils and boarders.
- ❖ Provide specialist teaching in English as a Second Language as appropriate.
- ❖ Discourage judgements made on social background, 'class' or accent.
- ❖ Discourage through effective classroom management either boys or girls from dominating lessons and encourage each group to view their contributions as having equal value.
- ❖ Ensure that group-work is used to increase opportunities for co-operation and understanding between different groups.
- ❖ Set exercises and examples in familiar contexts to which all pupils can relate.
- ❖ Value equally the experiences of either gender and other backgrounds.

All staff and pupils should recognise the importance of a whole-school approach in this area, and refer any concerns or any instances of inconsistency between policy and practice to the Headmaster or Deputy Head.

## **The Practice:**

### **1. The Advisory Group**

**Aim:** the School wishes to be proactive in the area of gathering staff's and pupils' views and opinions both about equal opportunities and finding further ways to extend the provision of equal opportunities throughout the School. The School wants to hear pupils' views and takes these seriously when initiating, reviewing and implementing School policy. This Advisory Group meets once each half term and, through its minutes, advises the Headmaster about initiatives which could be taken, and changes which could be made to improve current practices.

This Group is elected by peers for one year and has the responsibility of canvassing opinions, discussing and researching these, and representing conclusions and observations to the Headmaster.

### **2008 –2009 Members are:**

7	Erica Kukreja and Tristan Hobson
8	Juliet O'Brien and Erica Lee
9	Calum Matthews and James Beedle
10	Dale Keogh and Eleanor Brown

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| 11 | Oliver Chrisp and Matt Emmerson |
| 12 | Angie Li and Stelian Nenkov     |
| 13 | Oriana Bezzina, Theo Bellamy    |

and Head of School, Guy Hartley

The Group ideally includes members of the following sub-sets of the School's community:

- ❖ Overseas' pupils from Hong Kong and China
- ❖ Other overseas' pupils
- ❖ Other faiths and minority groups
- ❖ Other cultural groups
- ❖ Those with disabilities
- ❖ Those who have a strong interest in representing their views about equal opportunities.

The topics considered by the Advisory Group will include:

- ❖ The allocation of accommodation in School
- ❖ The allocation of resources in School
- ❖ Food and drink
- ❖ Rules and procedures
- ❖ Leisure and recreation opportunities
- ❖ Relationships between groups
- ❖ Use of facilities and buildings

This group is periodically advised by Mr Silas Moyo who works for Human Rights and Equality Engagement in the North East region of the UK, and who has run Equal Opportunities education sessions here for all Year groups.

## **2. The Equal Opportunities' Forum**

Once a term, the Equal Opportunities Forum is held on a Wednesday afternoon in House time. All pupils with an interest in promoting Equal Opportunities further are invited to attend. The Forum is chaired by the Head of School and any matters can be raised providing the 'proposer' makes his/her arguments, opinions or comments in a clear and honest way to allow others to discuss and debate these as raised. The Equal Opportunities Forum provides Minutes for the Headmaster for his consideration and possible action. The Headmaster is invited to reply to the Minutes via Assemblies, as for the School Council.

**DH Ewart**

2008 – 2009

Review date: Governors' Meeting, June 2010